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POLAR

The Great White North. The Story of Polar Exploration from the Earliest Times to the Discovery of the Pole. By Helen S. Wright. xviii and 489 pp., maps, illustrations and index. The Macmillan Co., New York, 1910. \$2.50. $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$.

The book tells merely the human story; the struggles to reach a goal, the difficulties of travel, the hardships from cold and hunger, etc. Although such incidents may show "the splendid fibre of which" the explorer is made, it may be doubted whether they will make polar exploration any more popular with the sceptics or "stir the laymen to a better endurance of the burdens and perplexities of the common lot."

The book is largely a compilation of quotations from explorers' narratives, each traveler presenting his own story of his sufferings and dangers. Among the illustrations is an excellent series of photographs of voyagers to the frozen north from Sebastian Cabot down the centuries to Peary. R. M. BROWN.

EDUCATIONAL

A Systematic Geography of America. By George William Webb, B.A. 108 pp., with ten diagrams, maps, and index. Methuen & Co., Ltd., London, 1911. 1s. $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$.

This is the fourth book in a series which provides for a study of the geography of the world on lines recommended by the London Board of Education. In this small volume Mr. Webb has condensed as much of the geography of North and South America as is considered essential for candidates preparing for fairly advanced examinations. No doubt the book is fitted for British needs, but as geography is taught at present in our schools the book will hardly be useful here. If the time ever comes when our High Schools shall demand of each graduate some such systematized knowledge of the world, it is to be hoped that the World Series which shall be prepared for these students may embody the excellencies of the present volume while avoiding its defects.

It is surprising to find in a book bearing the imprint of the current year that "the chief economic importance of Alaska is in its seal fisheries, but it is thought the country possesses gold deposits." Here, too, is to be found the old belief in the intactness of the Japan Current after a journey across the Pacific. British students are also told that our states number forty-four, that our chief source of petroleum is in western Pennsylvania, and that Boston is regarded as the intellectual center of the United States. Such statements are an added evidence of how difficult it is for our British cousins to keep up with the rapid pace of things American, but they are perhaps the chief defects in what is otherwise an extremely well-ordered, compact, and comprehensive survey of the geography of the New World. C. W. HOTCHKISS.

Europe and the Mediterranean Region. By J. B. Reynolds, B.A. viii and 184 pp., maps, illustrations and index. Adam and Charles Black, London, 1911. 1s. 4d. $7 \times 4\frac{1}{2}$.

A text book intended for children in the upper classes of elementary and lower classes of secondary schools. The book is cogently and clearly written and illustrated chiefly by excellent black and white maps containing no more information than is intended for study purposes. The geography of the Continent is treated not by countries but by natural regions which certainly form broader